



***State of Tennessee***  
***Department of Children's Services***

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**Incident Reporting Manual: Youth Development Centers and DCS  
Group Homes  
Office of Juvenile Justice  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor Cordell Hull Building**

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## **General Instructions**

Reporting incidents promptly and accurately is absolutely critical to the daily operation of the Department of Children's Services (DCS). Without the reporting of incidents, the Department's ability to respond to inquiries from the media, the legislative or executive branches of State government, or the general public would be seriously compromised.

### **Definition of Incidents**

To facilitate the reporting of incidents, a list of incidents likely to occur at DCS facilities has been developed. While the list is not inclusive, it is meant to be used as a guide by those individuals charged with reporting incidents.

### **Incident Reporting**

All incidents shall be reported using the Critical Incident Reporting Application. This application can be accessed from the DCS Intranet-Web Applications on the DCS Intranet at <http://www.intranet.state.tn.us/chldserv/>

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## Part 2

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# Procedures for Youth Development Centers and Community Residential Facilities

## Time Frames for Reporting Incidents

**Incidents occurring during regular working hours.** All significant incidents occurring during regular working hours (8:00 a.m. till 4:30 p.m. Central Time on Monday through Friday) must be reported by telephone to the Executive Director of Juvenile Justice Programs or to his or her designee's office **immediately**. Significant incidents are defined as disturbances, failures of the infrastructure (power, water, etc.), escape (YDC), a student death or serious injury or any situation that would likely bring media attention. The incident must be reported by using the proper e-filing procedure no later than end of the next business day.

### Youth Development Centers

When significant incidents occur at youth development centers after hours or on weekends, the facility staff will contact the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee will evaluate the situation as reported and then determine if it needs to be reported to the Executive Director of Juvenile Justice Programs. As a broad guideline, the Executive Director needs to know about disturbances, failures of the infrastructure (power, water, etc.), escape/runaway, a student death or serious injury, or any situation that would likely result in media attention for the Department of Children's Services.

### Group Homes

When significant incidents occur at group homes after hours or on weekends, the facility staff will contact the Group Home Director or designee. The director or designee will then evaluate the situation and determine if there is a need to contact the Director of Group Homes. The Director of Group Homes will then determine if there is a need to notify the Executive Director of Juvenile Justice Programs.

The Executive Director of Juvenile Justice Programs will determine when information relating to incidents that occur at youth development centers and group homes needs to be communicated to the Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Justice and/or Director of Communication for DCS.

### **All other Incidents**

- Incidents other than those referenced on page 2, paragraph 1 do not require the immediate notification of the Executive Director's office during regular business hours, nor do they require immediate notification to the central office staff after hours or on holidays.
- **These incidents must be reported by the end of the first working day following the occurrence of the incident by e-filing procedures.**

### **Guidelines for Reporting Incidents**

Reports must contain summary information and must highlight noteworthy specifics of the incident. Such noteworthy specifics must include, but not be limited to:

- Injuries sustained
- Individuals involved in the incident who are not otherwise specifically involved with DCS
- Contact with outside law enforcement agencies
- Contact with individuals associated with the media
- Whether there is any ongoing Internal Affairs investigation or Special Investigation Unit investigation

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Question – How do I get access to the Critical Incident Reporting Application?**

*Answer - Complete a remedy help desk ticket requesting access to the Critical Incident Reporting Application.*

### **Question - Where is the YDC and Group Home incident reporting application located?**

*Answer: Go to the DCS web site and scroll down to Web Applications, click on Web Applications then select Critical Incident Reporting.*

### **Question - Who should be included in the Addendum section of an incident report?**

*Answer – All students referenced in the narrative portion of an incident should be included in the addendum section. If an employee is injured during an incident or if an allegation of abuse is being made against an employee the employee should be included in the incident. When a YDC staff person transports a student in mechanical restraints the employee should be listed in the Addendum section of the incident report. Employees may also be added in the Addendum section at any other time that including them would seem to add to the value of the incident report.*

### **Question - When should a report be labeled preliminary instead of final?**

*Answer - And the answer would include the above - when further action or investigation is needed or required in the incident such as in the above situations.*

### **Question – How do I run reports?**

*Answer – Go to reports within the application. At this screen, you will need to type in a date range, pick which facility and nature you are inquiring about and hit run report. Note that there are three options, detail only, summary only or detail and summary.*

### **Question – How do I do a search by name, facility or date?**

*Answer – After getting into the application, hit search on the left hand side and a search screen will pop up. Enter the specific data (student name, facility or date) and hit search at the bottom of the screen.*

### **Question – How do I correct an incident already completed?**

*Answer – Type in the incident report number from the search screen and the incident report will pop up. Correct what is needed and hit save. If you are correcting an addendum, hit select on the bottom of the page and this will pull up the information for the addendum. Make sure you hit save.*

**Question – How do I add an addendum?**

Answer – After typing in your narrative of the incident, go to the bottom of the screen and hit add addendum. Enter all information and hit save.

**Question – How do I choose more than one nature from the list?**

*Answer – Hold down the Shift key and highlight all the natures associated with the incident.*

## **Definitions**

1. **Admission to Hospital** – A youth has been admitted to a hospital for any reason.
2. **Alleged Abuse By Staff** – A DCS or a contracted staff member is alleged to have physically, mentally, or sexually abused a youth.
3. **Alleged Impropriety** – A DCS or contracted staff member is alleged to have committed improper acts or to have participated in improper associations with a youth.
4. **Alleged Sexual Misconduct/Staff** – Allegations are made concerning the sexual misconduct of a DCS or contracted staff member at the facility/program. Does not include sexual abuse of youth. Refer to definition #2-“Alleged abuse by staff”
5. **Alleged Sexual Misconduct/Youth** – Allegations are made concerning the sexual misconduct of one or more youth.
6. **Arrest of Staff** – The confirmed arrest of a DCS or a contracted staff member.
7. **Arrest of Youth** – A youth has been arrested while in the custody of DCS and the arrest has been confirmed by a law enforcement agency.
8. **Arson** – A youth or any other individual has willfully and maliciously set fire, burned, or caused to be burned any property, building or structure and has caused, or has created the potential for, significant damage to persons or property. This definition applies regardless of whether the act involves the property of the DCS, the property of the youth, or the property of another person.
9. **Assault** – A physical attack on an individual by a youth that may or may not have necessitated medical attention.
10. **Assault by Youth on Staff** – A youth in DCS custody has physically attacked a staff member and the assault may or may not require medical attention.
11. **Assault by Visitor** – A visitor in a DCS facility has physically attacked another visitor, staff member or youth and the assault may or may not require medical attention
12. **Attempted Escape/YDC** – A youth has tried unsuccessfully to unlawfully leave the grounds of a youth development center, or the immediate supervision of YDC staff.
13. **Attempted Runaway/CRP**- A youth has attempted to flee the custody or supervision of a DCS community residential program or from someone to whom the youth had been entrusted. The attempt was unsuccessful and the youth did not leave the facility’s grounds.
14. **Attempted Suicide** – A youth has engaged in behavior that can be reasonably construed as an attempt to end his or her life.



15. **Automobile Damage** – Destruction intended or otherwise that has occurred to a motor vehicle.
16. **Bomb Threat** – Verbal or written statements have been made of a nature to cause fear of property damage or destruction, or personal injury or loss of life using explosives.
17. **Confinement, Use of** – The physical isolation of a YDC youth from the general population in a cell or room for control reasons,
18. **Confinement, Disciplinary, Use of** – The physical isolation of a YDC youth from the general population in a cell or room for disciplinary reasons.
19. **Contraband, Possession of** - A youth and/or any other individual has been discovered to possess, or to have gained or to be maintaining control over any item that is expressly prohibited by those legally charged with the responsibility for the administration and/or operation of the facility, and/or has caused any such item to be brought to the facility grounds.
20. **Destruction Personal Property** –Property other than state property has been damaged or destroyed.
21. **Death of a Youth** – Any life ending experience of a youth while in the care of DCS.
22. **Destruction State Property** – State property has been damaged or destroyed.
23. **Emergency Medical Treatment – Youth** – A determination has been made by a medical professional that immediate medical treatment is needed for a youth that cannot be provided at the facility where the youth is housed.
24. **Emergency MH Transfer** – A youth has been deemed to be in need of immediate mental health treatment and has been transferred to a mental health facility.
25. **Escape** – A youth has unlawfully departed from a youth development center, or secured transportation/custody.
26. **Failure to Return** – A youth on a pass has not returned to a facility at the scheduled time.
27. **Injury to Visitor** – A visitor has been reported injured while on facility premises.
28. **Injury of Staff** – A staff member has been injured or become ill on duty and the injury was treated on or off-campus.
29. **Mechanical Restraints-Use of** – The use of restraint devices to control the physical movement of a youth at a youth development center.

30. **Mechanical Restraints –Use of in Routine Transportation** – The use of restraint devices to control the physical movement of a youth or in route to a youth development center. Also applies to off-campus travel to destinations not including community residential programs or other less restrictive placements
31. **Medical Isolation/Confinement** – A youth’s medical condition has made it necessary, as ordered by a qualified medical professional, for him/her to be confined to an area where there is limited contact with others.
32. **Medication Mistake** – An error has been made in control/dispensing of medication at a youth development center or community residential program.
33. **N/A** – Staff is not associated with a nature involving a youth.
34. **Notice of Apprehension** – Written notification that a youth previously classified as missing, AWOL or on runaway status has been returned to the custody of DCS either voluntarily or otherwise.
35. **Other Not Listed** – The occurrence of any significant incident that does not fit any of the definitions listed.
36. **Physical Plant Problems** – A DCS facility has experienced an electrical, plumbing or equipment failure that directly jeopardizes the safety, well being, and quality of life for youth and staff. These occurrences can include, but are not limited to, heating and air conditioning failure, failure or activation of emergency systems, water or sewage plant problems, etc.
37. **Physical Restraint-Use of** – Staff’s use of physical contact and/or force to limit movement of a youth.
38. **Poss./Use Drugs/Intox** – A youth or other individual uses, possesses, gains or maintains control over any illegal or unauthorized drug and/or causes such an item to be brought onto the facility grounds. These drugs may include, but are not limited to, narcotics, hallucinogens, cigarettes, barbiturates, stimulates, marijuana, beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages or any medication not properly prescribed by a physician for the specific individual.
39. **Possession of a Weapon** – A youth or any other individual, gains or maintains, without authorization, control over any firearm or other object capable of causing serious injury or death and/or causes it to be brought onto the grounds of a DCS facility.
40. **Riot** – A serious incident of violence or disruption by youth that causes confusion and disorder and disrupts the normal operation of the facility. The acts of youth involved in a riot are intended to result in damage to property or injury to persons, to create a diversion for an escape, or to create an immediate danger to others.
41. **Runaway-CRP** – A youth has unlawfully departed from an activity, work or the grounds of a community residential placement.

42. **Stolen/Missing State Property** – Property that belongs to the state has been reported as lost or stolen.
43. **Strip Search** – An examination of the naked body of a youth for weapons, contraband and physical abnormalities. This also includes a thorough search of all of the youth's clothing while it is not being worn.
44. **Suicide Gesture/Threat** – Any act that might indicate a youth may have thoughts of taking his/her own life.
45. **Theft** – The act or an instance of stealing or larceny.
46. **Use of Law Enforcement** – Any situation for which law enforcement agencies, whether local or state, have been called to assist in addressing a problem situation at the facility or program.
47. **Use of Chemical Defense Spray** – Mace or another chemical weapon has been used to control one or more youth.
48. **Use of Emergency Vehicle** – Fire trucks, ambulances, or other life safety equipment have been summoned to a facility in response to a problem situation
49. **Youth Disturbance** – Youth have actively participated in disruptive activities that require the intervention of staff members and the direction of their attention, for a significant amount of time, away from normal routines and that potentially affect the safety and security of youth and staff.